



UPDATE

OF THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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MMHI Receives Three-Year Accreditation

Memphis Mental Health Institute (MMHI) has been awarded a three-year accreditation from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)—the agency responsible for setting national standards for hospital care.

In announcing the accreditation, Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities (DMHDD) Commissioner Elisabeth Rukeyser said, "This accreditation is of particular importance to the department because there are no recommendations pending."

This means MMHI is in full compliance in all categories JCAHO surveys for accreditation purposes. This includes such

items as clinical assessments (medical histories and physical exams), treatment and medication, patient rights, staffing, leadership, patient education, infection control, and safety and



environmental issues. "We are extremely pleased to provide this quality of care for service recipients in Shelby County and the rest of the state," she added.

New MMHI Chief Officer Michael Coppel says his philosophy of achieving quality care is through his staff. "You have to focus on meeting and then exceeding staff needs," Coppel said. "The outcome of your efforts will be reflected in the compassionate, professional care given to those we serve." Additionally, Coppel plans to focus on staff retention as a way to decrease the need for ongoing recruitment.

Baird/McDonald Graduate from TGEI

Two of the DMHDD's assistant superintendents for program services recently graduated from the Tennessee Government Executive Institute (TGEI).

Lynn McDonald of Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute (MTMHI) and Angela Baird of Lakeshore Mental Health Institute (LMHI) graduated in the Class of 2001 ceremony in November.

Established in 1983, TGEI consists of three one-week sessions held over a three month period that offers state senior executives the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and perspectives of leadership principles and practices.

Baird, who has been with the department since 1979, has an A.S. in psychology from Cumberland College in Lebanon and a bachelor's in psychology, sociology, and secondary education from Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro.

She began her career at the Jordan Center in Nashville as a technician trainee and worked up to institutional program coordinator by 1991 when she transferred to Lakeshore.



Baird

Serving as LMHI institutional program director until 2000, Baird was promoted to assistant superintendent. As such she has direct supervision of six department heads with indirect supervision of 376 subordinates.



McDonald

McDonald joined the department in 1973 as a registered nurse at Western Mental Health Institute. She also served in a nursing position at Memphis Mental Health Institute before coming to MTMHI in 1976.

During her 25 years at MTMHI, she served as program nursing supervisor in the Children and Youth Program, assistant program director, program specialist, clinical nurse specialist, director of the Acute Treatment Program and assistant superintendent since 1995.

McDonald holds an associate's degree in nursing from UT Martin and a master's in nursing from Vanderbilt University.

She is an adjunct faculty member at Vanderbilt's School of Nursing and is certified by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a Clinical Specialist in Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing since 1992.

Sturgis Named DMRS Interim Deputy Commissioner

Sandra Sturgis, former director of the Health Related Boards

Investigations Section of the Department of Health (DOH), was named interim deputy commissioner of the Division of Mental Retardation Services in December.

Sturgis will serve in her new position for four months while a national search is conducted for a permanent replacement. In announcing her appointment Finance and Administration Commissioner C. Warren Neel, Ph.D., said, "Due to the magnitude of issues currently facing this division, I feel it is imperative that we maintain strong administrative direction over the division during the time period needed to complete the national search."

"Sturgis has an extensive background in both public and private sector business management, of which approximately 17 years has been in state government," he concluded.

She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration, personnel management.

Sturgis replaces Barbara Brent who is now with the Division of Developmental Disabilities in the Arizona Department of Economic Security in Phoenix, Arizona.



Update

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Around the State

Housing Booklet Available on Internet

"A Place to Call Home," a publication that
addresses opposition to homes for people with
mental illness in Tennessee neighborhoods, is
available on the DMHDD web site at

www.state.tn.us/mental.

The booklet is a collaborative project
developed by the DMHDD Office of Housing
Planning and Development and The Tennessee
Fair Housing Council. It was written by Tracey
McCartney, executive director of the Tennessee
Fair Housing Council, and Nancy Blomgren.

The publication addresses the Fair Housing
Act and Housing for People with Disabilities
and covers both federal and state law. It also
addresses myths about housing for people
with disabilities and approaches to siting
group homes and housing options.



Happenings

- Centerstone Community Mental Health Centers has named officers of its Board of Directors. David Paine of Nashville, president and founder of David Paine + Partner is chairman; Lucy Keeney of Tullahoma, chapter president of Partners for Healing Medical Clinic, is chair-elect; and Richard Baxter, professor of business administration at Williamson Christian College, will serve as secretary.
- Kathy Parolini was recently named developmental manager of Dede Wallace Center in Nashville and will oversee the center's annual fund development. She has a bachelor's degree in education and a master's in education administration from Central Michigan University.
- Tennessee Christian Portland has added a speech and language therapist, Mary Lay, to its rehabilitation services. Lay has over 16 years experience in speech rehabilitation for brain injury and pediatric patients. She is most noted for her ability to work with pre-school-aged children with developmental disorders including autism and Down syndrome. For information on the speech therapy services at this facility call (615) 672-6809 or Linda West in White House at (615) 325-1227.
- The 2002 Tennessee Youth Leadership Forum is scheduled for June 10-13 at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. The forum is designed to provide 10th-12th grade students, who have disabilities, with information about disability issues, it also helps them become advocates for themselves and others. The forum is provided at no cost to participants. If interested, contact Ned Andrew Solomon, (615) 532-6556 or e-mail ned.solomon@state.tn.us.
- Paul Hickling has been named director of crisis response services for Frontier Health and will oversee crisis response staff for the eight-county area of Northeast Tennessee. He previously served as a psychological examiner at Frontier Health for seven years. Hickling has a master's degree in clinical psychology from Murray State University in Murray, Ky.
- The Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission (CARF) has awarded Frontier Health a three-year accreditation for employment services in the mental retardation/vocational rehabilitation division of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. Accredited employment services included planning, development, organizational and community employment.
- Calendar Item—The Policymaker's Discussion on Children's Health 2002 has been set for April 5, 2002.



Around the State

Park Center Elects Officers/ New Directors to Board

Park Center, a non-profit agency serving adults with mental illness, recently elected the following officers:

President—Deborah Johnson of BellSouth; 1st Vice President—Jim Phillips, president of Whitney Johns & Co.; 2nd Vice President—George Haley, MH advocate; Treasurer—Doug Berry, Bumpus, Hall, Myatt, Thomason and Emery; and Secretary—Susan Gorman, community volunteer.

The following new directors were elected: John Arriola, State Representative, 53rd District; Mary Jackson, community volunteer; Andy Jones, Northwestern Mutual; Pam Lewis, president of PLA Media; Louise Merritt, M.D., psychiatrist; and William Young, Office of General Counsel at Vanderbilt University.

A Special Birthday Party



About 150 people attended Jessie Pigue's 87th birthday party in October. Pigue's Clover Bottom family presented her with many gifts and long-stemmed white roses. George Kelley Florists in Donelson provided a white rose corsage that looked lovely on her silk ensemble.

From left are CBDC Chief Officer Frances Washburn, Pigue and MR Regional Director Janet Simons. Standing are Betty Young, Patricia Pickett and Amy Bishop.

Profile:

It's a Great Life in the Community for Chris

Bob and Doria Panvini of Nashville, how to do the simple tasks of life—like every other “typical” child.

He attended metro schools and participated in family outings and activities. While not able to pick up the skills as quickly as other children, he worked hard and figured out he wanted what everyone takes for granted; to be on his or her own, a responsible adult.

When he graduated from high school in 1989, the Panvinis were trying to find information on how to help Chris achieve his goal.

They were members of “The Arc of Davidson County,” an organization which supports people with disabilities in having self-determined and meaningful lives, and were working with other parents to plan for the future.

“That’s when the idea for an organization that would help people find their way into the community and allow them to become an integral part of their neighborhood came to mind,” Doria Panvini said.

In 1994, Chris moved into an apartment with a full-time companion (whose job it is to help assist in daily living). Two years later, he bought a house. The first part of his goal was realized. But how to maintain that goal and improve was the question.

“While having achieved his desire to live on his own, Chris will always need some assistance,” she said.

In 1997, the creation of “Mid-TN

Supplemental Living,” funded by the Division of Mental Retardation Services, enabled many people to be integrated into the community, no longer to be in the shadows of society.

“Mid-TN has allowed Chris to grow and become a part of his community,” she said. “He has a dog and works at New Horizons at the Nashville Air Guard base.

“Some of the other ‘ordinary’ tasks Chris is learning to do with the aid of his companion are cooking and doing his laundry along with building his everyday skills.”

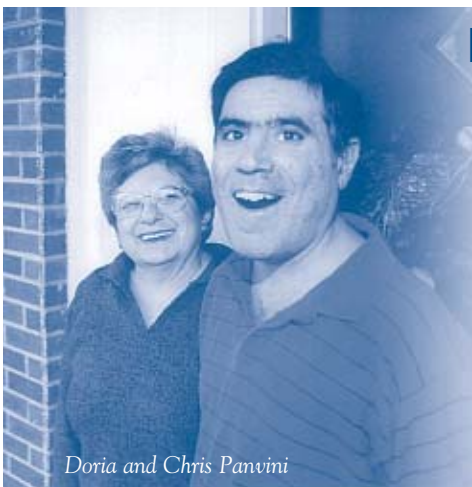
Panvini said that the support the Mid-TN staff receives from their organization and the state is excellent.

“It helps to know that if there’s ever a problem, solutions can be found relatively quickly,” she said. “The staff has great support in its work.”

The way the community has accepted him is really amazing said Panvini.

“Last year we received a call saying that Chris was looking unkempt, a little unshaven,” she said. “It just turned out to be part of his costume for Halloween. But to take the time and care enough about him to pick up the phone and call us, that’s wonderful.”

Mid-TN Supported Living, Inc., at 1161 Murfreesboro Road, Suite 215 in Nashville, 37217 can be reached at (615) 367-0592 or e-mail midtndhunt@compuserve.com



Doria and Chris Panvini

Moving away from home and living on one's own is a major step for most people. No one telling you what to do, how to do it and what to wear.

Then to one's chagrin, life likes to throw us some curveballs. Faced with unexpected challenges, living on one's own can become a true testament of freedom. At times there's a need for community assistance or a helping hand from an individual. But with patience and effort, freedom can be gained.

Chris is one such person. Living life under the auspice of having mental retardation is not only a dog tag that can close doors, but the ability to live a “normal life” is often a dream.

Today, he has shed himself of many of the restrictions associated with retardation. He owns a house and works on being “just another guy on the street.”

Born with mental retardation and a hearing loss, Chris was taught by his parents,

Right—A fallen marker. It is located behind the fence (note arrow below) that surrounds one of the two former cemeteries at the old location of MTMHI.



The History Behind the Project

...excerpts from “Tennessee’s Neglected Cemeteries”

There were two cemeteries at the old hospital in Nashville that opened in 1852.

Once people were placed in the hospital, most of them never returned to their homes. When they died they were buried on the hospital grounds—segregated in life by their illnesses, segregated in death by the color of their skin.

Tombstones once marked the graves. Over the years, the land became more valuable as a garden than a graveyard. The tombstones were plowed under and corn was grown there.

During the runway construction project at the Nashville International Airport in 1990, the burial grounds, of what was thought to be a few gravesites, were discovered. Work at the site stopped immediately.

State archeologist, Nick Fielder, helped determine as many as 500 graves were at this location. This is the location of the black cemetery. Airport officials redesigned the runway and a fence surrounds the site.

The Dell Corporation bought most of the land at the old location. However, the State of Tennessee retained 15 acres of the original 250. Within those 15 acres is a 1.3-acre plot containing approximately 1,500 gravesites. This location—the cemetery for whites—has no markings of recognition.

Group Implements Cemetery Restoration

Consumers, mental health organizations, advocates from across the state, drop-in center members and staff gathered at Centerstone Community Mental Health Center in October to begin the process to honor the “forgotten people” buried in the state cemeteries.

The group’s goal is to acknowledge the existence of and restore the dignity to the forgotten cemeteries. The group plans to start with those buried at the old Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute off Murfreesboro Road and move across the state.

“We want to bring dignity, honor and respect to the consumers buried there,” said

Project Coordinator Judy Reeves. “And, we want the monument to be something beautiful for everyone.”

The project is backed by the Tennessee Mental Health Consumers’ Association and the Dell Corporation as well as Centerstone.

A search is on for history relating to the project and the people who were buried there. To provide history or for more information, contact Judy Reeves, consumer affairs representative, Centerstone CMHC, P.O. Box 40406, Nashville, TN 37204-0406; phone (615) 463-6665 or e-mail judy.reeves@centerstonecmhc.com



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